



WHIP

School Site Habitats

WHIP is the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

The Purpose of WHIP is to create, enhance, or maintain habitat on school grounds and environmental education centers to benefit native wildlife and provide educational opportunities to teach about wildlife habitat.

Whether your schoolyard is one paved acre or a 100-acre forested site, a school site habitat area can provide you and your students with a unique learning experience.

Cost-share info: 75% of the actual cost of implementing habitat improvement projects can be provided to schools and environmental education centers by NRCS. Each Project can receive up to \$2,500.

Requirements: At least one teacher from each school participating in the program must complete a NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife sponsored WILD School Site Workshop. At the workshop teachers learn about wildlife, what plants would provide the best wildlife habitat, how to inventory a site and prepare wildlife habitat development plans, and how to involve students in the development and implementation of the plan.

Length of the project: Plans will be developed for a minimum of five years. All practices must be maintained for the length of the plan.

How to apply: Contact your local NRCS Service Center for an application. See reverse side for locations.

Cost-share is available for:

- Planting trees, shrubs, & grasses
- Native meadow establishment
- Log and snag creation, brush piles
- Fencing or tree guards to protect plants

Cost-share is NOT authorized for:

- Roads, buildings, boardwalks, platforms, or benches
- Pond construction or maintenance that creates deep-water habitat



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Example of a WHIP School Site Habitat Development Project in New Jersey

Creating a wild school site will help dispel the notion that wildlife lives somewhere beyond our towns and cities. "Wildlife" can be as small as the smallest microscopic organisms. "Wildlife" includes birds, mammals, fish, insects, spiders, reptiles, and amphibians. Your school site can provide diverse habitat for different wildlife species. Though nature is usually considered a topic for science study, environmental education is interdisciplinary. Schools throughout New Jersey have utilized WHIP to creatively attract wildlife to their sites and create outdoor learning centers.

One teacher was the driving force behind the a special project that got the whole community involved. An Outdoor Site Committee comprised of staff, students, parents, and community representatives was formed to lead the planning process. Together, they utilized unique landscape features on-site to construct an amphitheater, create a wetland, seed a native

grass and wildflower meadow, and began a reforestation project.

Once established, the school site habitat was used by teachers throughout the school in various disciplines. A guide to using the school's meadows and trails was developed. In-service trainings were also held at the school to educate teachers about the many potential uses of the site. The teachers then applied to other sources to supplement work completed though WHIP, such as the addition of a butterfly garden.



NRCS Service Centers

Freehold (732)462-1079X3

Serving Mercer, Middlesex & Monmouth

Frenchtown (908)782-4614X3

Serving Hunterdon, Somerset, & Union

Hackettstown (908)852-2576 X3

Serving Sussex, Warren & Morris

Hainesport (609)267-0811 X3

Serving Burlington, Camden, & Ocean

Vineland (856)205-1225X3

Serving Atlantic, Cape May, & Cumberland

Woodstown (856)769-1126X3

Serving Gloucester & Salem

Morris Plains (973)538-1552

Serving Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Passaic, Morris & Union

Skills gained by students:

Geography and map reading, plant & tree identification, data

collection, *how to design an experiment,*

wildlife migration, *aesthetic quality of nature,*

Creative writing about nature, & *soil and water conservation!*

